Dewan's reply.—It seems to me that separate agricultural boards as suggested by you would result in a multiplicity of organisations which would be working at cross purposes.

Member.—Agriculture is an important subject.

Dewan.—Agriculture is very important; cottage industry is very important; sanitation is very important; roads and communications are also very important.

Member.—Sanitation is not important.

Dewan.—It may not be very important in some parts of the country;but it is very important in some others. There is more than one vital function to be performed in a village and one organised board should suffice for the discharge of all those functions. You are aiming at village autonomy, which is a desirable thing. You want the people of the village to concentrate their attention on matters of importance to the village, and to have a dominating voice in their administration. It is a desirable object. It is with that view that the constitution of Village Panchayats is proposed by the Government. The improvement of agriculture is one of the functions of such Panchayats as defined in that Bill. If you want separate sub-committees of that board to devote special attention to agriculture, etc., I believe there will be no objection to it. As far as I remember, the Bill provides for co-option of members, for the appointment of sub-committees and the co-ordination of the activities of such sub-committees.

Member.—But it would be imposing another tax.

Dewan.—That is a different matter. You cannot, as they say in Tamil, measure with an empty fore-arm. You want the wherewithal for conducting your operations. There is no real disagreement between you and the Government. All that I say is that we should not create a separate board for each and every function. It is, however, a matter of detail which may be considered later.

57. Erection of a water-reservoir for the benefit of lands near Aramboly and the application of the Remission Rules to those lands.

Mr. Narasingamurtia Pillai Agastyalingam Pillai (Member, Tovala Taluk) said that, though the Government had sanctioned a sum of Rs. 56,000 for works in connection with the improvement of tanks at Aramboly, and the Erappayar diversion, the latter had consumed Rs. 16,000, and, although including that amount, a sum of Rs. 33,000 had actually been spent on the works, Aramboly had not derived any benefit so far. He also observed that the tanks there had not been thoroughly improved and rendered fit for storing water for agricultural purposes. He, therefore, prayed that a reservoir might be constructed at Poygayar as recommended by Mr. Horsely several years ago and as prayed for by the people of the locality, so as to irrigate an area of 7,000 acres of land. By the construction of such a reservoir all the water that was at present running waste through the Tovala under-tunnel and the *odais* of Nellayadi, Punkanadi and Sraravashi could be stored for purposes of irrigation. The Member also submitted that the provision of petty sums to the extent of Rs. 2,000 or so for the repair of the tanks in Aramboly was useless.

He then requested that the old practice of allowing remissions for failure of crops be again brought into force.

In conclusion, the Member complained that court fees were now imposed on applications for relief under the Irrigation Regulation and prayed that the practice might be stopped.

Dewan's reply.— I agree with you in thinking that the allotment of small sums of money like Rs. 2,000 for the repairs of irrigation works in any part of the country serves no useful purpose. The Chief Engineer has promised to look into this matter and to allot a larger amount in the next year's budget for the repair of some of your tanks.

In regard to the irrigation of 7,000 acres of land, as suggested by Mr. Horsely, the question of the construction of the necessary reservoir has got to be investigated. I shall ask the Chief Engineer to do it.

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The question of exempting applications under the Irrigation Regulation from payment of court fees to which you have referred will also be considered.

58. Suggestions for improving the irrigation of lands on the western side of the Pazhayar tail-end and along the Manakkudiankal.

Mr. Kanakku Matevan Pillai Kumaraswami Pillai (Member, Agastisvaram Taluk) made certain suggestions for improving the irrigation of lands on the western side of the Pazhayar tail-end and along the Manakkudiankal. He represented that the stagnation of water in those parts caused injury to the single-crop cultivation of adjacent fields and mentioned the following as the defects which called for remedy in that connection :—

(*a*) Want of a bank on the western side of the Manakkudi lake to a length of 350 feet.

(*b*) The width of the river at its mouth where it emptied itself into the lake was very narrow, being only 20 to 50 feet in several places. The width should be at least 200 feet at the mouth.

(*c*) The lay of the salt factories, the existence of the Tengumputur *odai* and the Karayalar's bund, etc., were impediments to the free flow of water through the river.

He then spoke about the Manakkudi lake and said that it was only 500 acres in extent and that the existence of the numerous *alloms* there prevented the free flow of water and raised the water level of the *kayal* with consequent damage to wet cultivation. The Member prayed that the necessary improvements might be effected to remove the evils mentioned above.

The Member also spoke about the harm caused to cultivation by the Pillapattu dam and the Mission dam. He said that there were breaches on the western bank of the river to the north of Pillapattu dam and the consequent silting up of 15 acres of lands and the failure of crops in 30 more acres.

Dewan's reply.—You have spoken about the Pillapattu dam and the Mission dam. The Chief Engineer is of opinion that the Pillapattu dam should be lowered about 4 feet and provided with falling shutters, which will automatically open during floods and keep down the flood level in the upper reaches. The Government agree with the Chief Engineer in his opinion and will arrange to carry out his suggestion.

In regard to the Azhankal or the Manakkudiankal, the Chief Engineer is of opinion that it should be improved. The necessary steps will be taken. In regard to the restoration of the waterway of the Pazhayar between the salt pans belonging to Messrs. Karayalar and Avadhanikal, heavy compensation will have to be paid for the portions of the pans to be acquired, and the Chief Engineer considers that the present width of about 400 feet at the narrowest portion would suffice if the course of the river is drained properly, which is being now done.

59. Kottayam-Kumili and Devicolam-Peermade roads.

Mr. A. R. St. George (Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association) first spoke about the new road from Peermade to Devicolam. He stated that the work on the first mile and on 3 furlongs of the 2nd mile along the present trace had been practically finished, excepting some levelling and the construction of certain side-drains. He urged the construction of those side-drains before the monsoon set in.

As regards the further portion of the Peermade-Devicolam road from the 3rd furlong of the 2nd mile, the Member said that his Association had no objection to the cutting of the new trace as proposed by the Department of Public Works and prayed that the work might be started without delay. He believed that the Land Revenue Department had to settle the question of the compensation of the estate lands through which the trace passed, and that, until that was done and the lands handed over to the D. P. W., work on the new cutting could not be commenced. He understood

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